

**Statement by Thomas K. Donahue
to the
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources**

**Fiscal Year 2006 Drug Budget and the Byrne Grants, HIDTA, and other law
enforcement programs:**

“Are we jeopardizing federal, state and local cooperation?”

March 10, 2005

Chairman Souder, Ranking Member Cummings, and distinguished members of the Committee: I am honored to appear before you today to discuss the Chicago HIDTA's concerns with the Administration's FY06 budget proposal that contains unprecedented budget cuts for the HIDTA Program, Byrne and Justice Assistance Grant programs and the transfer of the HIDTA Program to the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF). I appear before you with 37 years of law enforcement experience, 10 years experience as a narcotics investigator and 12 years experience as a prosecutor concentrating on organized crime, narcotics cases, and related violent crimes. I have had the honor of serving as the director of the Chicago HIDTA since August 2000. My testimony today will attempt to answer the question posed by the Committee:

“Are we jeopardizing federal, state and local cooperation?”

In doing so I will provide you with an overview of the HIDTA program; the impact of HIDTA on the Chicago region and the differences between HIDTA and OCDETF.

In 1988, Congress wisely recognized the importance of coordinating federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to effectively address the nation's drug threat. Congress established the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Program to provide coordination of drug enforcement efforts in critical regions of the country. This coordinated effort was necessary due to competing strategies within the federal, state, and local law enforcement community.

Building on the concept that the country faces a national drug abuse epidemic which is in reality a network of related and unrelated regional and local drug abuse problems and the markets that supply them, HIDTAs address regional drug problems based upon a unique threat assessment process. Each HIDTA develops its own strategy consistent with and complimentary to the National Drug Control Strategy. HIDTA Executive Boards implement their strategies by funding structured and formal initiatives (task forces), each with a mission that best uses its particular expertise and addresses a particular threat. A targeted strategy, implemented locally, produces greater immediate impact, while at the same time provides avenues for further investigation into national and international trafficking groups.

HIDTA Executive Boards, comprised of an equal number of federal, state and local law enforcement executives, meet regularly to govern each HIDTA. The HIDTA management structure creates a level playing field among federal, state and local partners who understand all aspects of law enforcement and put the interests of the HIDTA above their own. Executive Boards hire directors who are highly experienced law enforcement professionals. Directors act as neutral brokers for participating agencies and are charged with carrying out the collective policy decisions of their Executive Boards. This neutrality fosters an innovative program, immune to turf battles. No other program of the federal government that integrates state, local and federal assistance and financial awards, allows this level of local oversight and direction. This is the first time in history state and local law enforcement has been empowered to manage drug investigations in their region.

The HIDTA program is in the forefront of promoting innovative methods and ideas. The evolution of the HIDTA intelligence subsystem initiative is an example. Historically, the sharing of intelligence among law enforcement agencies has been abysmal despite decades of attempts by federal agencies to create intelligence sharing centers. The program requirements of establishing intelligence centers within each HIDTA and mandating federal, state and local participation has resulted in the sharing of intelligence on an unprecedented scale. The HIDTA.net/ riss.net/LEO information system architecture electronically links each HIDTA. Each HIDTA has direct access to multiple agency and commercial databases, and provides a full range of analytical services. HIDTA Investigative Support Centers (ISCs) now stand as object lessons in interagency cooperation, collaboration and coordination. HIDTA ISCs have played an integral role in numerous noteworthy criminal investigations.

Other innovations include:

1. Event deconfliction - HIDTA pioneered systems that allow undercover officers to schedule a time and location for events such as stakeouts, drug buys, execution of search and arrest warrants and sweeps, etc., and to determine if the event they are scheduling would conflict with a different agency for a similar time and location. Event deconfliction is a requirement within the program, and is available to non-HIDTA agencies as well. This system is critical to officer safety.
2. Target deconfliction - Agencies have wasted countless resources investigating the same targets because of systemic difficulties or reticence to share information. HIDTAs have developed systems that allow agencies to share targeting information, and are actively working with DEA and other agencies to develop a National Virtual Pointer System that agencies will use. HIDTA credibility as a neutral entity has fostered this progress and the intelligence subsystems are making it work.
3. National Clan Lab Database - Built in partnership with the El Paso Intelligence Center, this was the first federal law enforcement database to allow direct state/local access. Many methamphetamine labs are rural in nature. Many HIDTA-funded task forces who address clan lab investigations would likely be disbanded if no HIDTA funds were available.
4. Electronic intercept capabilities - HIDTAs have developed centralized systems that have revolutionized technical investigative capabilities around the country.
5. RISS/HIDTA partnership -HIDTAs are members of the Regional Information Sharing

Systems and have used the RISS to establish HIDTA.net, a secure system which connects all HIDTAs electronically.

6. Operation COBIJA - a multi-agency, multi-state interdiction project hailed as the best such effort ever developed.
7. Training - HIDTAs have leveraged existing training programs by working with them to bring training to the officer, rather than requiring officers to travel. Tens of thousands of local/state/federal officers have benefited from this coordinated low cost training.

Each HIDTA has its own examples of how regional law enforcement has changed for the better because of its existence.

The HIDTA program has enjoyed wide acceptance by the heads of state and local law enforcement agencies for two important reasons. Under HIDTA, state and local heads of agencies join with their federal counterparts on an equal basis to determine the direction of their individual HIDTAs. There is no other cooperative endeavor of this magnitude in law enforcement today. Secondly, the HIDTA program has been able to project a degree of separation from other federal agencies by its placement within the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), a factor which has fostered willing state and local participation.

President Bush's recent budget proposal to Congress includes reducing the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program funding from \$227 million in FY2005 to \$100 million for FY2006. Additionally, the administration's budget moves the program from the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) Bureau of State and Local Affairs, to the Department of Justice under the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force Program (OCDETF).

The proposed funding cuts to the HIDTA program as set forth in the administration's budget submission to Congress will eviscerate a highly successful program and eliminate the existing level of coordination among federal, state and local drug law enforcement agencies. A budget cut of such magnitude (56%) would cause the elimination of some HIDTAs and make the funding of others so minimal as to render them ineffective. Successful nationwide programs developed and administered by individual HIDTAs such as those mentioned above will, at least, be significantly reduced or in some cases discontinued.

HIDTA's most important contribution to the war on drugs is the partnerships it has nurtured among participating agencies. These partnerships, developed over years, have become an institutionalized part of the program. This has led to leveraging of resources among its participants, which would not have occurred under any other program. This leveraging of resources and fiscal flexibility will likely be eliminated by placing HIDTA under the Department of Justice. Furthermore, placing HIDTA within a department that gives the perception it is under the control and direction of a federal law enforcement entity would certainly influence state and local participation and threaten collaborative partnerships that have been nurtured by the HIDTA model. If the HIDTA program is moved from the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Executive Office of the

President, it will give the wrong message to law enforcement and diminish the importance of the War on Drugs in the eyes of the public.

CHICAGO AREA IMPACT/Comments

In 2004 Chicago HIDTA initiatives seized 2,280 kilos of cocaine, an increase of 102% over 2003; 39.5 kilos of heroin, an increase of 75% over 2003; 16,101 kilos of marijuana, an increase of 270% over 2003 and \$9,015,385. USC, an increase of 51% over 2003. **The drug war is ongoing in Chicago.**

Chicago is a major U.S. transshipment hub for poly drug trafficking organizations. As a Midwest gateway, it serves as a distribution center for vast quantities of heroin, cocaine, marijuana and all types of illegal drugs. Multikilogram to ton quantities of these drugs are transported overland to Chicago primarily from Mexico, California and southwestern states in private and commercial vehicles. Once in Chicago drug shipments are typically broken down into smaller quantities for further distribution in or near the city. Additional quantities are transported to other Midwestern cities such as Detroit, Milwaukee and St. Louis, as well as to many cities and towns in the eastern United States for distribution. Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations and criminal groups are the principal transporters of most illicit drugs to Chicago, particularly cocaine, marijuana, Mexico produced heroin and also significant quantities of South American heroin. Once in the city, the extensive network of organized street gangs, an estimated 65 gangs with 68,000 members, control nearly all of the retail drug distribution in Chicago proper and its surrounding suburbs. The same routes and methods are used to transport drug proceeds back to source areas.

HIDTA helps to coordinate drug enforcement efforts for the City of Chicago and surrounding counties. Law enforcement partnerships with HIDTA have enabled the investigation, apprehension and prosecution of individuals responsible for distributing a broad array of dangerous drugs and causing the drug related violence manifested in home invasions, shootings, and kidnappings. Moreover, it has helped the Chicago Police Department and other law enforcement agencies build drug conspiracy cases against drug trafficking organizations and has supported complex investigations that have resulted in indictments both at the local and Federal levels.

The Chicago Police Department (CPD) has worked closely with HIDTA since 1995 when an initiative was formed to target the Gangster Disciples Street Gang. Since then, the working relationship between HIDTA and the Chicago Police Department has succeeded in disrupting the major narcotics trafficking rings and the distribution networks that are responsible for the deadly nexus of drugs, gangs and guns that have been a bane on Chicago. Reduction in drug crime has been due, in large part, to the successful collaborative model developed by HIDTA. This model brings local, state and federal law enforcement together to focus on a common mission—the disruption of drug trafficking. Chicago has not only benefited from this collaboration, it has learned that it is a smarter way of doing police business in urban crime areas and has clearly helped to make the city a safer place.

Through their role as a clearinghouse for sharing strategic information, HIDTA has provided the Chicago Police Department with the ability to identify, track and target trafficking groups. The Chicago Police Department and HIDTA have collaborated on numerous successful drug initiatives. One such initiative is the Street Corner Conspiracy Initiative. This initiative clears open air street corner drug markets, reclaims them from drug dealers, and restores community safety, thus giving the community a quality of life they haven't enjoyed in many years. Initiative operations have resulted in 35 investigations and 548 arrests as well as participation in four federal drug conspiracies with 198 arrests. If this one initiative did not materialize because HIDTA was unavailable, the city of Chicago would still be imperiled by 746 drug dealers plying their trade and terrorizing citizens. HIDTA has also coordinated specific enforcement initiatives against local street gangs such as the Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords, Latin Kings, Black Disciples, Four Corner Hustlers, Latin Disciples and numerous others who have created sophisticated networks for the distribution of drugs.

From September, 2002 to May, 2004 HIDTA partnered with the Chicago Police Department and state and federal agencies in addressing what may be the most serious drug threat in Chicago – heroin. HIDTA sponsored Operation DAYTRADER culminated in federal charges against 48 members of the violent Mafia Insane Vice Lords Street Gang and state charges against an additional 55 members. Because of the volume of information gathered from this operation, the initiative and the Chicago HIDTA Investigative Support Center (ISC) developed a Chicago Heroin Tracking Database, which tracks heroin arrests, seizures and other relevant data.

Furthering enforcement activities against organized Chicago street gangs, HIDTA has dedicated three local/state/federal populated initiatives to concentrate on the "Main 21", the twenty one organized street gang leaders identified as being the most violent and influential in drug distribution.

Drug activity fosters violent crime. In 2001, 2002 and 2003 Chicago ranked second, first and second in the number of murders in the United States. Fifty per cent (50%) of these homicides were gang and drug related. Chicago's homicide total for 2004 was almost 25% lower than in 2003. Innovative and concentrated strategies instituted by Chicago Police Department Superintendent Philip Cline, including HIDTA sponsored initiatives such as the Street Corner Conspiracy Initiative, West Side Heroin Initiative, and the Drug Related Violent Crime Initiative, have been credited with being instrumental in this reduction. There is little question that citizens applaud these enforcement initiatives for making the streets safer and allowing families to once again enjoy life in their communities.

Chicago HIDTA has also partnered with the Cook County Sheriff's Police Department to develop the Cook County Jail Initiative. The Cook County Jail is one of the largest single site pre-trial holding facilities in the United States, with an average daily count of at least 9,000 male and female detainees. This initiative brings together Cook County Sheriff's Police Department personnel and Chicago Police Department personnel as well as a working relationship with the Illinois Department of Corrections to gather intelligence from jail inmates as to gang and drug trafficking activity and disrupt the management of these activities by incarcerated gang leaders. HIDTA has designed an informational gang database to collate this information. Relevant information is shared with law enforcement agencies in affected jurisdictions.

HIDTA has also concentrated drug enforcement efforts in the surrounding areas of Cook, Grundy, Kendall and Will counties. Chicago based street gangs have migrated to these areas due to HIDTA successes in Chicago and a desire to expand markets. HIDTA initiatives have been developed to counter these threats.

Because it is a major destination and transshipment hub for poly drug trafficking organizations, HIDTA sponsors interdiction initiatives that have become nationally acclaimed. The Illinois State Police led Narcotics and Currency Interdiction Unit (NARCINT) uses traditional and non-traditional investigative practices involving surveillance and complex intelligence analysis to identify, target and interdict illicit drug and currency shipments generated by drug trafficking/money laundering organizations. This includes rapid response to intelligence regarding in-transit illicit drug shipments traveling through Illinois via motor carrier and follow up investigations of drug shipments seized in other jurisdictions and destined for delivery in Illinois. The Narcotics and Currency Interdiction Unit works in close concert with the Southwest Border COBIJA operation and was the first non-traditional border state to be included in this highly successful drug interdiction effort.

The Chicago Police Department led Package Interdiction Team (PIT) targets the shipment of illegal drugs sent via government and private package/parcel carrier services. Initiative personnel inspect and profile suspicious packages at shipping facilities. Upon discovering illicit drugs, they target the addressee/receiver and take enforcement action. Information gathered regarding other parts of the chain of distribution, including shippers/receivers, shipping/transportation companies and package handlers is acted upon or shared with other law enforcement agencies. Their expertise has led to numerous speaking engagements and training exercises throughout the country and the 2002 Office of National Drug Control Policy Outstanding Interdiction Effort Award.

The Internal Revenue Service led HIDTA sponsored Money Laundering and Financial Crimes Initiative has recently uncovered a scheme to launder drug proceeds. Over \$100 million in mortgage fraud has been identified to date and this amount is expected to increase substantially with further investigation totally supported by the analytical skills of the HIDTA Investigative Support Center.

In addition to enforcement initiatives, much of what has been accomplished through HIDTA has been possible because of drug intelligence developed by the HIDTA Investigative Support Center. Very few local jurisdictions have the capacity to develop this level of drug intelligence. Consequently, they rely on the astute analysis and real time information from the intelligence operations of HIDTA that are key to advancing our law enforcement goals. The Chicago HIDTA Investigative Support Center provides analytical and case support not only for HIDTA initiatives but also for other law enforcement agencies that lack the resources and expertise to initiate and successfully conclude drug enforcement operations. The Investigative Support Center has also acquired and developed the SAFETNet system, a state of the art target and event deconfliction system essential to officer safety in drug investigations and prevention of duplication of investigative efforts. Chicago HIDTA has provided SAFETNet to five surrounding states.

HIDTA has ensured that law enforcement drug operations have consistent direction, follow policy guidelines, engage in strategic planning, and communicate across

organizations and jurisdictions. These factors give law enforcement an advantage over criminals that would be difficult to achieve if working independently. HIDTA initiatives have been instrumental in assisting law enforcement agencies with:

- Accessing an “all source” counter-drug Investigative Support Center and source of counter-drug intelligence products, including a heroin offender tracking base.
- Disrupting distribution networks that supply organized street gangs in the greater Chicago metropolitan area.
- Targeting the numerous “open air drug markets” operated by street gangs in Chicago, especially the heroin markets on the West side.
- Interdicting drug and currency shipments via the highway system and government and/or private carriers.
- Disrupting organizations involved in laundering illicit money from the drug trade and enabling the development of tax cases against dealers.
- Financial analysis directed at seizing assets acquired through illicit drug proceeds.
- Identifying the international sources of supply of drug trafficking groups operating in Chicago.
- Case and trial support as well as post case seizure analysis.

All of these activities speak to the comprehensive strategy that is required for intervening in drug crime. Each HIDTA has developed a cohesive, comprehensive program combining regional, and locally focused initiatives to implement the national mission of countering the drug threat.

Conclusion: HIDTA clearly represents a model for leveraging all resources in order to provide comprehensive approaches for stopping drug crime. The joint leadership of the HIDTA Executive Board has been instrumental in ensuring that law enforcement engages in strategic planning and coordination of efforts to disrupt drug markets, halt the proliferation of criminal networks, and reduce drug-related deaths. Without the ability to maintain the operational collaboration made possible by HIDTA resources, local law enforcement faces a risk of returning to the days when cooperation was episodic, delivered on a case-by-case basis, and found to be generally ineffective in disrupting drug trafficking. Under these circumstances, it will be impossible to maintain declining crime rates and prevent drug-related violence from again spiraling out of control.

At a time when state and local governments are increasingly forced to cut budgets because of economic difficulties, it is imperative for the federal government to continue LOCAL assistance against what is still the WAR ON DRUGS. HIDTA is an integral part of that assistance. Media ads alone will not eliminate drug abuse. More effective is the multi faceted HIDTA approach. Now that we have developed a viable and effective

way of combating these organizations on a national and regional level through HIDTA, it is not the time to pull back or try to reorganize. This country is at war on several fronts including the streets of our major cities. We have won many battles through the HIDTA program. Yet the war rages on. Terrorists murdered over 3,000 U. S. citizens on 9/11 and 1,500 American soldiers in Iraq. In the streets of our major cities and surrounding communities street gangs and drug dealers, better referred to as urban terrorists, have caused the drug related deaths of thousands of our citizens. We must continue to maintain and increase support in this noble fight.

Attached to this statement are three letters in support of the HIDTA program.

1. Letter from Philip J. Cline, Superintendent of Police, Chicago.
2. Letter from Michael F. Sheahan, Sheriff of Cook County.
3. Letter from Larry G. Trent, Director, Illinois State Police.



OFFICE OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE
CHICAGO

PHILIP J. CLINE
SUPERINTENDENT

March 8, 2005

The Honorable Mark E. Souder
Chairman
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources
House Government Reform Committee
2231 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515-1403

Dear Chairman Souder,

I would like to take this opportunity to object to the budget cuts and organizational reform proposed for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program (HIDTA). In recent years Chicago HIDTA has proved to be an invaluable ally for the Chicago Police Department. Through our partnership with HIDTA, we have seen significant results in the reduction of narcotics sales in our communities. It is my understanding that HIDTA stands to lose 56% of their funding, and will be restructured in a way that limits local collaboration. We are concerned that the significant funding cuts and the loss of local participation in HIDTA will severely jeopardize the federal, state and local cooperation that is so important in fighting narcotics and their related crime in our community.

Chicago HIDTA helps to coordinate drug enforcement efforts for the City of Chicago. The Chicago Police Department (CPD) has worked with HIDTA since 1995 when an initiative was formed to target the Gangster Disciples street gang. Since then, working with HIDTA has allowed the disruption of major narcotics trafficking rings and the distribution networks that are responsible for the deadly nexus of gangs, guns and drugs that trouble Chicago. Recent reductions in drug-related crime have been due, in part, to the successful collaborative model developed by HIDTA. This model brings local, state and federal law enforcement together to focus on a common mission—the disruption of drug trafficking. We have not only benefitted from this collaboration, we have learned that it is a smarter way of doing police business in urban crime areas and has helped to make our City a safer place.

Our partnership with HIDTA has enabled the investigation, apprehension and prosecution of individuals responsible for distributing a broad array of dangerous drugs and causing drug-related violence. Moreover, it has helped us build drug conspiracy cases against drug trafficking organizations, and has supported complex investigations that have resulted in indictments both at the local and federal levels.

Much of what we have accomplished with the assistance of HIDTA has been possible because of drug intelligence developed by the HIDTA Investigative Support Center. We rely on the analysis and real time information from HIDTA intelligence operations. Through their role as a clearinghouse for sharing strategic information, HIDTA has provided CPD with the ability to

identify, track and target trafficking groups. If funding levels were reduced, our Department would sustain a critical loss to our ability to continue successful drug operations, such as Street Corner Conspiracies. These operations clear open air street corner drug markets, reclaim them from the drug dealers, and restore community safety. They have resulted in more than 35 investigations and 500 arrests, as well as participation in several federal drug conspiracies resulting in more than 100 arrests. As a result of our successful partnership with HIDTA, our streets are safer and families can more fully enjoy life in their communities.

Keeping the streets safe is further enhanced by other HIDTA initiatives in the metropolitan area such as the Cook County Jail initiative. This initiative brings together Cook County Sheriff's P.D. personnel and CPD personnel to gather intelligence from jail inmates as to gang and drug trafficking activity, and disrupt the management of these activities by incarcerated gang leaders. HIDTA has designed an informational gang database to collate this information.

HIDTA ensures that law enforcement drug operations have consistent direction, follow policy guidelines, engage in strategic planning, and communicate across organizations and jurisdictions. These factors give law enforcement an advantage over criminals that would be difficult to achieve if working independently. HIDTA initiatives have been instrumental in assisting the CPD with, among other initiatives, disrupting distribution networks that supply street gangs, targeting "package interdiction," providing access to the information center and intelligence networks, targeting heroin markets, and providing case and trial support as well as post case seizure analysis.

All of these activities speak to the comprehensive strategy that is required for intervening in drug crime. They also show how varied skills are required that may be beyond those of traditional law enforcement, how multiple knowledge bases need to be developed, and how human, technological and financial resources need to be applied strategically.

HIDTA clearly represents a model for leveraging all resources in order to provide comprehensive approaches for stopping drug crime. The joint leadership of the HIDTA Executive Board has been instrumental in ensuring that law enforcement engages in strategic planning and coordination of efforts to disrupt drug markets, immobilize the proliferation of criminal networks, and reduce drug-related crime. Without the ability to maintain the operational collaboration made possible by HIDTA resources, local law enforcement faces a risk of returning to the days when cooperation was unpredictable, delivered on a case-by-case basis, and often ineffective in disrupting drug trafficking.

The Chicago Police Department opposes plans for the reduced funding and the reorganization of HIDTA. If the funding levels are dropped and if local participation in HIDTA is reduced it will be difficult, if not impossible, to maintain our declining crime rates and to prevent escalated drug-related violence. The Chicago Police Department believes it is imperative to continue HIDTA in its present form of joint federal, state and local participation and at its current or increased funding level if we are to maintain our advantage over narcotic traffickers and beat drug dealers at their own game.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Philip J. Cline". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Philip" and last name "Cline" clearly distinguishable.

Philip J. Cline

MICHAEL F. SHEAHAN
SHERIFF



MARJORIE H. O'DEA
CHIEF OF POLICE

COOK COUNTY SHERIFF'S POLICE DEPARTMENT

1401 SOUTH MAYBROOK DRIVE
MAYWOOD, ILLINOIS 60153
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March 8, 2004

Representative Mark E. Souder
Chairman
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice
Drug Policy and Human Resources
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6143

Dear Representative Souder:

The purpose of this letter is to underscore the importance of continued funding of the High Intensity Drug Trafficking (HIDTA) initiative for Federal, State and local law enforcement. A reduction in government funding of this initiative will have a very serious negative impact on law enforcement's ability to investigate drug trafficking and its related crimes in Cook County.

The High Intensity Drug Trafficking (HIDTA) initiative is an extremely successful program in Chicago and surrounding Cook County. Its continued viability is critical to the successful case development and prosecution of Gang Crime and Narcotic offenders in this highly populated area of the country. Cook County is the second largest county in the country and is comprised of the City of Chicago, one hundred and eighteen municipalities and a significant amount of unincorporated area.

The current mission of the Chicago Police Department is to make every effort to vigorously drive gang activity and narcotic trafficking beyond the city limits of Chicago. This strategy has been successful but has had a negative impact on suburban municipalities within Cook County. Suburban municipalities are experiencing increased narcotic activity as well as an increase in narcotic related street crimes and homicides.

The HIDTA initiative has been successful in targeting drug traffickers in the suburbs of Cook County and has been an extremely reliable and beneficial source of intelligence to law enforcement. For example, recent intelligence has revealed that 60% of the Chicago Police Department's "Main 21" drug traffickers live in suburban Cook County. The

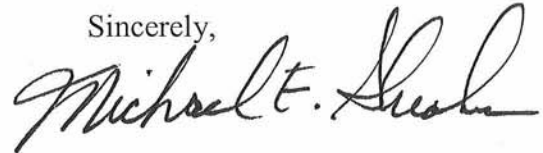
Chicago Police Department, DEA, FBI, ATF, Cook County Sheriff's Office, U.S. Attorney's Office and the Cook County State's Attorneys Office continue to work cooperatively together to share intelligence and investigate the criminal enterprises directed by these high ranking gang members who operate in Chicago and in the suburbs.

Law enforcement's ability to obtain intelligence has been enormously enhanced through the world-wide intelligence network that HIDTA created and maintains. The HIDTA De-confliction Program is invaluable in its ability to identify targets of on-going investigations conducted by disparate law enforcement agencies. The De-confliction Program has become critical to officer safety during undercover operations.

The Cook County Sheriff Office has a 75 member Gang Crimes/Narcotic Unit which receives essential monetary support from HIDTA. The unit's mission is to work cooperatively with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and focus on assisting suburban Cook County municipalities targeting organized gangs and drug dealers who have begun to take a foot hold within the County. Most suburban police departments are inadequately equipped to conduct their own covert investigations which frequently require undercover operations and several weeks or months to complete.

In conclusion, our ability to pro-actively investigate narcotic trafficking and related crimes is directly linked to maintaining or increasing HIDTA funding. Any reduction in this most critical resource would have a devastating negative effect on our ability to investigate narcotic related crimes and will have an impact on quality of life issues for every citizen in Cook County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael F. Sheahan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" being the most prominent part.

Michael F. Sheahan
Sheriff of Cook County



ILLINOIS STATE POLICE
Office of the Director

Rod R. Blagojevich
Governor

March 7, 2005

Larry G. Trent
Director

Honorable Mark Souder
Chairman
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy,
and Human Resources
2231 Rayburn
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Souder:

I would like to take this opportunity to stress the importance of continued funding support to the Chicago HIDTA and operational support to the Illinois State Police narcotics enforcement efforts in the Chicago area. The ISP has been fortunate to receive continuous funding for the upper-level narcotics enforcement and interdiction efforts of the Narcotics and Currency Interdiction (NARCINT) initiative since 1999. This multi jurisdictional ISP unit has proven to be an extremely important element in furthering the efforts of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), both through operational enforcement efforts and, more importantly, from the cooperative relationships that have been developed between the Chicago HIDTA/NARCINT and law enforcement agencies nationwide.

The cooperative effort and supportive venue made possible through the Chicago HIDTA program have successfully bridged the gap between federal, state, and local agencies allowing for the first time a successful, unified approach to battling the war against drugs. The NARCINT effort alone has propelled the problem of illicit narcotics trafficking and drug-related money laundering in the Chicago area to the forefront of enforcement efforts nationally. The Chicago HIDTA, with the support of NARCINT, became the first non border state effort to be included in the Operation COBIJA Concept that has successfully monitored and devised enforcement strategies against narcotics smuggling through Mexico.

Through the efforts of the Chicago HIDTA initiative, agencies around the country have a support mechanism for the continuation of cases beyond the traditional one-dimensional concept. Additionally, the intelligence support provided through the Chicago HIDTA Investigative Support Center makes the Chicago HIDTA program truly a multi faceted resource. To lose the financial support and logistical tools made possible through the HIDTA concept would be catastrophic to the people of Illinois, because despite the lack of viable funding, the violent and destructive narcotics enterprises that exist around the world will continue to focus distribution efforts toward the hub that exists in the Chicago area. Unfortunately, without the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area concept in Illinois, the ISP drug enforcement efforts will be significantly curtailed, as will the efforts of other local agencies who have joined forces under the HIDTA umbrella.

As you move forward in your Subcommittee efforts to make critical funding decisions, I respectfully request unbridled support from Washington in order to keep the HIDTA operation in Illinois at its current funding level so that it remains one of vitality and viability. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff should there be anything else that can be done by the ISP to impress upon the leadership of Congress what is at stake if the Chicago HIDTA does not remain fiscally strong, functional, and grounded by an Executive Director and Executive Committee that represents all levels of enforcement interests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry G. Trent".

Larry G. Trent
Director